SUNDAY'S SERMON.

ONE OF REV. DR. TALMAGE'S STERLING DISCOURSES.

Subject: "Farming a Gospel Type." (Preached Before the American Farmers' Encampment at Mount Gretna, Penn.)

TEXT: *"Elisha, the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth."—1 Kings, xix., 19.*

Farmers of America! Accept my salutation. Our text puts us down into the plow's furrow, where many of us have been before. My boyhood passed on a farm and my father a farmer, your style of life is familiar to me. One of my earliest recollections is that of my father coming in from the hot harvest field exhausted, the perspiration streaming from his forehead and chin, and fainting on the doorsill, and my mother resuscitating him, until seeing the alarm of the household he said: "Don't be frightened. I got a little tired and the sun was hot, but I am all right now." And I remember mother seated at the table, often saying, "Well, I am too tired to eat!" The fact is that I do not think the old folks got thoroughly rested until they lay down in the graveyard back of Somerville to take the last sleep.

Office seekers go through the land and they stand on political platforms, and they tell the farmers the story about the independent life of a farmer, giving flattery where they ought to give sympathy. Independent of what? No class of people in this country have it harder than farmers. Independent of what? Of the curculio that stings the peach trees? of the rust in the wheat? of the long rain with the rye down? Independent of the grasshopper? of the locust? of the army worm? of the potato bug? Independent of the drought that burns up the harvest? Independent of the cow with the hollow horn? or the sheep with the foot rot? or the pet horse with a nail in his hoof? Independent of the cold that freezes out the winter's grain? Independent of the snowbank out of which he must shovel himself? Independent of the cold weather when he stands threshing his numbed fingers around his body to keep them from being frosted? Independent of the frozen ears and the frozen feet? Independent of what? Fancy farmers who have made their fortunes in the city and go out into the country to build houses with all the modern improvements, and make farming a luxury, may not need any solace; but the yeomanry who get their living out of the soil and who that way have to clothe their families and educate their children and pay their taxes and meet their interest on mortgaged farms—such men find a terrific struggle. And my hope is that this great National Farmers' Encampment may do something toward lifting the burdens of the agriculturist. Yes, we were nearly all of us born in the country. We dropped corn in the hill, and went on Saturday to the mill tying the grist in the centre of the sack so that the contents on either side of the horse balanced each other, and drove the cattle afield, our bare feet wet with the dew, and rode the horses with the halter to the brook until we fell off, and hunted the mow for nests until the feathered occupants went cackling away. So we all understand rustic allusions. The Bible is full of them. In Christ's sermon on the mount you see the full blown lilies and the glossy back of the crow's wing as it flies over Mount Olivet. David and John, Paul and Isaiah find in country life a source of frequent illustration, while Christ takes the responsibility of calling God a farmer, declaring, "My Father is the husbandman."

Noah was the first farmer. We say nothing about Cain, the tiller of the soil. Adam was a gardener on a large scale, but to Noah was given all the acres of the earth. Elisha was an agriculturist, not confining a few acre lot; for in my text you find him plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth. In Bible times the land was so plenty and the inhabitants so few that Noah was right when he gave to every inhabitant a certain portion of land; that land, if cultured, ever after to be his own possession.

They were not small crops raised in those times, for though the arts were rude the plow turned up very rich soil, and barley, and cotton, and flax, and all kinds of grain came up at the call of the harvesters. Pliny tells of one staff of grain that had on it between three and four hundred ears. The rivers and the brooks, through artificial channels, were brought down to the roots of the corn, and to this habit of turning a river wherever it was wanted Solomon refers when he says: "The King's heart is in the hand of the Lord, and He turneth it as the rivers of water are turned, whithersoever He will."

The wild beasts were caught, and then a hook was put into their nose, and then they were led over the field, and to that God refers when He says to wicked Sonacherib, "I will put a hook in thy nose and I will bring thee back by the way which thou camest." And God has a hook in every man's nose, whether it be Nebuchadnezzar or Ahab or Herod. He may think himself very independent, but some time in his life or in the hour of his death he will find that the Lord Almighty has a hook in his nose.

This was the rule in regard to the culture of the ground. "Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together," illustrating the folly of ever putting intelligent and useful and pliable men in association with the stubborn and the unmanageable. The vast majority of trouble in the churches and in reformatory institutions comes from the disregard of this command. "The Lord, Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together."

There were large amounts of property invested in cattle. The Moabites paid 100,000 sheep as an annual tax. Job had 7000 sheep, 3000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen. The time of vintage was ushered in with mirth and music. The clusters of the vine were put into the wine press, and then five men would get into the press and trample out the juice from the grape until their garments were saturated with the wine and had become the emblems of slaughter. Christ Himself, wounded until covered with the blood of crucifixion, made use of this allusion when the question was asked: "Wherefore art Thou red in Thine apparel and Thy garments like one who treadeth the wine vat?" He responded: "I have trodden the wine press alone."

In all ages there has been great honor paid to agriculture. Seven-eighths of the people in every country are disciples of the plow. A government is strong in proportion as it is supported by an affluent and industrious yeomanry. So long ago as before the fall of Carthage Strabo wrote twenty-eight books on agriculture; Hesiod wrote a poem on the same subject—"The Weeks and Days." Cato was prouder of his work on husbandry than of all his military conquests. But I must not be tempted into a discussion of agricultural conquests. Standing amid the harvests and orchards and vineyards of the Bible, and standing amid the harvests and orchards and vineyards of our own country—I want to run the analogy between the production of crops and the growth of grace in the soul—all these sacred writers making use of that analogy.

In the first place I remark, in grace as in the fields, there must be a plow. That which theologians call conviction is only the plowshare turning up the sins that have been rooted and matted in the soil. A farmer said to his indolent son, "There are a hundred dollars buried deep in that field." The son went to work and plowed the field from fence to fence, and he plowed it very deep and then complained that he had not found the money, but when the harvest was gathered and sold for a hundred dollars more than any previous year, then the young man took the hint as to what his father meant when he said there were a hundred dollars buried down in that field. Deep plowing for a crop. Deep plowing for a soul. He who makes light of sin will never amount to anything in the church or in the world. If a man speaks of sin as though it were an inaccuracy or a mistake, instead of the loathsome, abominable, consuming and damning thing that God hates, that man will never yield a harvest of usefulness.

When I was a boy I plowed a field with a team of spirited horses. I plowed it very quickly. Once in a while I passed over some of the sod without turning it, but I did not jerk back the plow with its rattling clevises. I thought it made no difference. After a while my father came along and said: "Why, this will never do; this isn't plowed deep enough; there you have missed this and you have missed that." And he plowed it over again. The difficulty with a great many people is that they are only scratched with conviction when the subsoil plow of God's truth ought to be put in up to the beam.

My word is to all Sabbath-school teachers, to all parents, to all Christian workers—plow deep! plow deep!

And if in your own personal experience you are apt to take a lenient view of the sinful side of your nature put down into your soul the ten commandments which reveal the holiness of God, and that sharp and glittering coulter will turn up your soul to the deepest depths. If a man preaches to you that you are only a little out of order by reason of sin and that you need only a little fixing up, he deceives! You have suffered an appalling injury by reason of sin. There are quick poisons and slow poisons, but the druggist could give you one drop that would kill the body. And sin is like that drug; so virulent, so poisonous, so fatal that one drop is enough to kill the soul.

Deep plowing for a crop. Deep plowing for a soul. Broken heart or no religion. Broken soul or no harvest. Why was it that David and the jailer and the publican and Paul made such ado about their sins? Had they lost their senses? No. The plowshare struck them. Conviction turned up a great many things that were forgotten. As a farmer plowing sometimes turns up the skeleton of a man or the anatomy of a mouldering dog buried, so the plowshare of conviction turns up the ghastly skeletons of sin long ago intombed. Geologists never brought up from the depths of the mountain mightier ichthyosaurus or megatherium.

But what means all this crooked plowing, these crooked furrows, the repentance that amounts to nothing, the repentance that ends in nothing? Men groan over their sins, but get no better. They weep, but their tears are not counted. They get convicted, but not converted. What is the reason? I remember that on the farm we set a standard with a red flag at the other end of the field. We kept our eye on that. We aimed at that. We plowed to that. Losing sight of that, we made a crooked furrow. Keeping our eyes on that we made a straight furrow. Now in this matter of conviction we must have some standard to guide us. It is a red standard that God has set at the other end of the field. It is the cross. Keeping your eye on that you will make a straight furrow. Losing sight of it you will make a crooked furrow. Plow up to the cross. Aim not at either end of the horizontal piece of the cross but at the upright piece, at the centre of it, the heart of the Son of God, who bore your sins and made satisfaction. Crying and weeping will not bring you through. "Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance." Oh, plow up to the cross!

Again I remark, in grace as in the field there must be a sowing. In the autumn weather you find the farmer going across the field at a stride of about twenty-three inches, and at every stride he puts his hand into the sack of grain and he sprinkles the seed corn over the field. It looks silly to a man who does not know what he is doing. He is doing a very important work. He is scattering the winter grain, and though the snow may come, the next year there will be a great crop. Now, that is what we are doing when we are preaching the Gospel—we are scattering the seed. It is the foolishness of preaching, but it is the winter grain; and though the snow of worldliness may come upon it, it will yield after a very glorious harvest. Let us be sure we sow the right kind of seed. Sow mullen stalk and mullen stalk will come up. Sow Canada thistles and Canada thistles will come up. Sow wheat and wheat will come up. Let us distinguish between truth and error. Let us know the difference between wheat and hellebore, oats and henbane.

The largest denomination in this country is the denomination of Nothingarians. Their religion is a system of negations. You say to one of them: "What do you believe?" "Well, I don't believe in infant baptism." "What do you believe?" "Well, I don't believe in the perseverance of the saints." "Well, now tell me what you do believe?" "Well, I don't believe in the eternal punishment of the wicked." So their religion is a row of ciphers. Believe something and teach it; or, to resume the figure of my text, scatter abroad the right kind of seed.

A minister in New York preached a sermon calculated to set the denominations of Christians quarreling. He was sowing nettles. A minister in Boston advertised that he would preach a sermon on the superiority of transcendental and unorganized forces. What was he sowing? The Lord Jesus Christ nineteen centuries ago planted the divine seed of doctrine. It sprang up. On one side of the stalk are all the churches of Christendom. On the other side of the stalk are all the free Governments of the earth, and on the top there shall be a flowering millennium after a while. All from the Gospel seed of doctrine. Every word that a parent, or Sabbath-school teacher, or city missionary, or other Christian worker speaks for Christ comes up. Yes, it comes up with compound interest—you saving one soul, that one saving ten, the ten a hundred, the hundred a thousand, the thousand ten thousand, the ten thousand one hundred thousand—on, on forever.

Again I remark, in grace as in the farm there must be a harrowing. I refer now not to a harrow that goes over the field in order to prepare the ground for the seed, but a harrow which goes over after the seed is sown, lest the birds pick up the seed, sinking it down into the earth so that it may take root. There are new kinds of harrow, but the harrow as I remember it was made of bars of wood nailed across each other, and the under side of each bar was furnished with sharp teeth, and when the horses were hitched to it it went tearing and leaping across the field, driving the seed down into the earth until it sprung up in the harvest. Bereavement, sorrow, persecution are the Lord's harrows to sink the Gospel truth into your heart. There were truths that you heard thirty years ago that have not affected you until recently. Some great trouble came over you, and the truth was harrowed in, and it has come up. What did God mean in this country in 1851? For a century there was the Gospel preached, but no crop of it produced no result. Then God harnessed a wild panic to a harrow of commercial disaster, and that harrow went down Wall street and up Wall street, down Third street and up Third street, down State street and up State street, until the whole land was torn to pieces as it never had been before. What followed the harrow? A great awakening in which there were 500,000 souls brought into the kingdom of our Lord. No harrow, no crop.

Again I remark, in grace as in the farm there must be a reaping. Many Christians speak of religion as though it were a matter of economics or insurance. They expect to reap in the next world. Oh, no! Now is the time to reap. Gather up the joy of the Christian religion this morning, this afternoon, this night. If you have not as much grace as you would like to have, thank God for what you have, and pray for more. You are no worse enslaved than Joseph, no worse troubled than was David, no worse scourged than was Paul. Yet, amid the rattling of fetters, and amid the gloom of dungeons, and amid the horror of shipwreck, they triumphed in the grace of God. The weakest man here has 500 acres of spiritual joy all ripe. Why do you not go and reap it? You have been groaning over your infirmities for thirty years. Now give one round shout over your emancipation. You say you have it so hard; you might have it worse. You wonder why this great cold trouble keeps revolving through your soul, turning and turning, with a black hand on the crank. Ah, that trouble is the grindstone on which you are to sharpen your sickle. To the fields! Wake up! Take off your green spectacles, your blue spectacles, your black spectacles. Pull up the corners of your mouth as far as you pull them down. To the fields! Reap! reap!

Again I remark, in grace as in farming there is a time for threshing. I tell you bluntly that is death. Just as a farmer beats the wheat out of the straw so death beats the soul out of the body. Every sickness is a flail to thresh out the soul. Every death is the threshing floor. What, say you, is death to a good man only taking the wheat out of the straw? That is all. An aged man has fallen asleep. Only yesterday you saw him in the sunny porch playing with his grandchildren. Calmly he received the message to leave this world. He bade a pleasant good-by to his old friends. The telegraph carries the tidings, and on swift rail trains the kindred come, wanting once more to look on the face of dear old grandfather. Brush back the gray hairs from his brow; it will never ache again. Put him away in the slumber of the tomb. He will not be afraid of that night. Grandfather was never afraid of anything. He will rise in the morning of the resurrection. Grandfather was always the first to rise. His voice has already mingled in the doxology of heaven. Grandfather always did sing in church. Anything ghastly in that? No. The threshing of the wheat out of the straw. That is all.

The Saviour folds a lamb in His bosom. The little child filled all the house with her music, and her toys are scattered all up and down the stairs just as she left them. What if the hand that plucked four o'clocks out of the dooryard is still? It will work out her triumph. What if the voice that made music in the home is still? It will sing the eternal hosanna. Put a white rose in one hand and a red rose in the other hand, and a wreath of orange blossoms on the brow, the white flower for the victory, the red flower for the Saviour's sacrifice, the orange blossoms for her marriage day. Anything ghastly about that? Oh, no. The sun went down and the flower shut. The wheat threshed out of the straw. "Dear Lord, give me a sleep," said a dying boy, the son of one of my elders; "Dear Lord, give me sleep." And he closed his eyes and awoke in glory. Henry W. Longfellow, writing a letter of condolence to those parents, said: Those last words were beautifully poetic: 'Dear Lord, give me sleep.'"

'Twas not in cruelty, not in wrath
That the reaper came that day;
'Twas an angel that visited the earth
And took the flower away.

So it may be with us when our work is all done. "Dear Lord, give me sleep."

I have one more thought to present. I have spoken of the plowing, of the sowing, of the harrowing, of the reaping, of the threshing. I must now speak a moment of the garnering.

Where is the garner? Need I tell you? Oh, no. So many have gone out from your own circles—yea, from your own family—that you have had your eyes on that garner for many a year. What a hard time some of them had! In Gethsemanes of suffering they sweat great drops of blood. They took the "cup of trembling" and they put it to their hot lips and they cried: "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." With tongues of burning agony they cried: "O Lord, deliver my soul!" But they got over it. They all got over it. Garnered! Their tears wiped away; their battles all ended—their buildens lifted. Garnered! The Lord of the harvest will not allow those sheaves to perish in the equinox. Garnered! Some of us remember, on the farm, that the sheaves were put on the top of the rack which surmounted the wagon, and these sheaves were piled higher and higher, and after a while the horses started for the barn; and these sheaves swayed to and fro in the wind, and the old wagon creaked and the horses made a struggle and pulled so hard the harness came up in loops of leather on their backs, and when the front wheel struck the elevated floor of the barn it seemed as if the load would go no farther until the workmen gave a great shout, and then with one last tremendous strain the horses pulled in the load; then they were unharnessed and forkful after forkful of grain fell into the mow. Oh, my friends, our getting into heaven may be a pull, a hard pull, a very hard pull; but these sheaves are bound to go in. The Lord of the harvest has promised it. I see the load at last coming in the door of the heavenly garner. The sheaves of the Christian soul sway to and fro in the wind of death, and the old body creaks under the load, and as the load strikes the floor of the celestial garner it seems as if it can go no farther. It is the last struggle, until the voices of angels and the voices of our departed kindred and the welcoming voice of God shall send the harvest rolling into eternal triumph, while all up and down the sky the cry is heard: "Harvest home! Harvest home!"

Not the Usual Way.

A young lady of this city, who is said to be worth not less than $50,000 in prospective, was the object of the attention of a young man with whom she was very favorably impressed, but who, with every encouragement, continued to pause just short of a proposal. The young lady managed to put in circulation what appeared to be a reliable report that her pecuniary expectations were simply in the public mind, and in two days the young fellow had proposed and been accepted. It is not often that $50,000 constitutes an obstacle to a young lady's matrimonial success, but it did in this case, and the young lady doesn't feel in the least put out about it.

THE real giant is the man who overcomes himself.

LABOR is life; successful labor is life and gladness; and successful labor with high aims and just objects brings the fullest, truest and happiest life that can be lived upon the earth.

LEPERS OF TRACADIE.

HARROWING SIGHTS IN THE LAZARETTO OF NEW BRUNSWICK.

A Commodious Hospital for the Afflicted Ones—Self-Sacrificing Samaritans—The Scourge Described.

One has not to go to far Molokai to witness the awful blight of the flesh, leprosy, writes a New York Herald correspondent from Tracadia, N. B. Here in this out of the way spot of New Brunswick, on the shores of the great ocean, I saw sights that are calculated to make the soul sick indeed. Here are literally immured a score or more of wretches touched with a foulness which, for no fault of their own, excludes them forever from the world. It is true they are treated with more consideration than the lepers of Scriptural times who dwelt in the open sepulchres about Jerusalem, subsisting on the fragments that accidental charity dropped on the ground in the wilderness. Nor is heard from them that terrible cry as of a lost soul, "Unclean! Unclean!" No, the lot of these unfortunates is made as endurable as the ghastly malady of which they are the victims will permit.

The Dominion government has erected a commodious hospital on the banks of the Tracadie River, overlooking the gulf into which the slender streamlet falls. It would be difficult to find anywhere a lovelier combination of "streamlet and hill" than this. Would that one could forget the hopeless fate of these fellows. But alas! they are "the world forgetting, by the world forgot." All that makes life worth enduring has been withdrawn from them.

Nevertheless, it is pleasant to know that their lot is more endurable than it was years ago. When the lazaretto was established, about forty-five years ago, the poor creatures were lassoed like beasts, drawn by ropes and beaten with long poles to force them toward the lazaretto. No one would touch them. They were torn from the bosom of their families, although in many cases they were the sole support of wife and children. The cottages which then constituted the hospital were filthy and uncared for. Males and females were cast together, and the contamination of immorality was added to the other horrors. Their food was laid down on the ground, to be eaten when and where they chose. To the people in the surrounding country the name "lazaretto" was clothed with all the horrors of Gehenna. Little wonder, then, that when a member of a family was attacked with the loathsome disease his relatives took every precaution to conceal the condition. It may well be supposed that this secrecy tended to spread the disease.

The condition of the lazaretto at length became a public scandal; so much so that in 1868 it reached the ears of Sister St. John (Miss Vigir), of the Hotel Dieu, Montreal. She volunteered to go and care for these poor outcasts. Other volunteers were asked for and every Sister in the house tendered her services. Seven were chosen, carefully instructed in the treatment of leprosy, and then they started a mission compared with which the task of cleaning the Augean stables was a light one. But the Sisters cheerfully set to work, and in a very few years everything was transformed. The provincial government of New Brunswick, glad to have the scandal removed, provided all necessary funds for meeting the expenses of the institution. From being a loathsome charnel house it was transformed into a home.

The inmates and the house itself are kept scrupulously clean. Hired attendants do all the manual work. The inmates have no tasks imposed on them. Their path to death is smoothed and relieved of cares. They have a small farm with which they may do what they choose. They have boats in which they may fish and trawl or simply idle away the summer days.

The disease is called leprosy, although it is probable that it is in many respects different from the leprosy which whitened the skin and rotted the bones of the Hebrews of old. But this is undoubtedly a malady of the same nature. It has been called by medical men Greek elephantiasis. A recent authority thus describes its symptoms:—

"The first indication of the disease is the appearance of tiny tobercles on the skin, and especially on the face. These increase from the size of a pin head to that of a hazel nut. The nose and lips become thickened and swollen, so that the mouth is distorted and the features unrecognizable. The eyes droop, and eyelashes and eyebrows, and sometimes the hair drop out. After a time the tubercles break, ulcerate and discharge, the disease even attacking the cartilage and bone, and piece by piece joints and flesh fall off until death give the sufferer freedom from his terrible lot."

The average duration of the disease from the time the first symptoms are discovered until death ensues is about ten or twelve years.

The lazaretto was taken charge of by the Dominion government in 1880, and Dr. Smith was placed in charge, who keeps a sharp lookout for infected persons.

In a conversation I had with the Doctor he said:—

"I am not yet satisfied that the disease is incurable. I discharged one man from the hospital some years ago and he has had no return of the symptoms. Last year I discharged a girl who had been admitted to the lazaretto just as soon as the first symptoms of infection developed themselves. Still, though these two are apparently free from the malady, I do not regard the cases as permanently cured, and I still hold them under close surveillance. Of late the disease has been dying out in Tracadie, its original seat; but out of the five new cases taken in last year one was from Cape Breton and four from the parishes which adjoin Tracadie—namely, Shippegan and Caraquet. I have a new focus to the disease, situated between Shippegan and Caraquet, and to this centre I have traced it to other settlements."

The act which gives the Doctor authority to segregate patients does not extend to the The new hotbeds of the disease but he feels that as soon as he possesses that power he will be able to stamp it out entirely.

Hard Riding.

During the last century when long-queues, called riding posts, were much in vogue in Europe among the aristocracy and wealthy and sporting men, a match was made between Mr. Shafts and Mr. Maywell for 1,000 guineas, Mr. Shafts to find a man who would ride 100 miles per day for twenty consecutive days.

There was a great deal of money bet on this thing, principally against it being done. It was well known, however, the distances of 800 to 1,200 or even 1,300 miles had frequently been covered at a rate of from 100 to 120 or even 150 miles per diem, but the knowing ones thought that the enormous distance of 2,700 miles at 100 per day would be likely to break any horseman down. Nevertheless Mr. John Shafts performed the feat without any extra fatigue or punishment. He used thirty horses, and rode three or four of them each day.

In Turkey the Sultan's mails and dispatches from outlying provinces used to be carried by Tartars riding post, with relays of horses changed every twenty or thirty miles, and are now in some parts of the country where telegraphs have not been established. The same man in charge went the whole distance: these couriers would often perform great feats of endurance. From Bagdad to Constantinople is 1,600 miles, not over a level rolling prairie, but frequently crossed mountain ranges, along precipices, across torrents, &c., and there is not a mile of road made the whole way, yet the ordinary time the Tartars took to perform the distance was a fortnight, and on urgent occasions it has been done in twenty days, and even in eleven days.

There is no doubt whatever about this, because this route through Asia was the Persian Gulf, was, in former days, before the Red Sea route was established, often used by officers and others who did not mind rough travel and were in a hurry to get home or to get out to India, and they often rode with the Tartars from end to end, beside which the British resident at Bagdad, or, rather the residency, was for more than a century in the habit of transmitting despatches from India to Constantinople and Europe by these same carriers. As much as 150 miles per day has often been done for eight or ten days by the Tartars. They only rested four hours out of the twenty-four, and pushed on the rest of the time at a rate of six to eight miles an hour.—[Galveston News.

The Care of Rubber Plants.

There is probably no more familiar house plant in America than the rubber plant, unless it is the calla. They are favorites for the same reason that many friends are favorites, because they withstand such an amount of abuse and be lovely and perennially fresh. Rubber plants cost but a trifle if bought when young and tiny; and fair care will keep them growing sturdily onward for years until they grow so big that no place in the house save the hall is tall enough for them.

A rubber plant needs a good size pot to begin with. One with some bits of charcoal and broken brick or potsherds in the bottom to aid drainage and prevent the roots from becoming bound. As the plant grows tall it is recommended that the top leaf be pinched off so that the plant may sprout and grow two branches instead of one. Every morning or every evening the earth in which the plant is growing should get a thorough drenching if the plant is in the open window. Every week the leaves should have the faces washed to keep their pores clear.

This treatment, with the addition, if possible, of a summer in the back yard alone with nature is all that a rubber plant asks. The calla is scarcely more exacting. The dry root is planted in a pot and watered well with warm water, the one idea being to keep the soil as much like what anyone would imagine the bottom of a brook to be as possible. In a warm, drained pot thoroughly wetted every day with warm water, and all the sunshine possible, the golden-tongued lily will live and thrive to bless the one who loves it.—[New York World.

Shetland Ponies for Children.

Ponies, little and big, shaggy and sleek, are now so common-up town, drawing dog carts or under the saddle, driven by ladies and children, or ridden by both. It is a wonder where they all come from, and a dealer, who has been importing them for years, told a New York Times reporter:

"The trade in Shetlands," he said, "has grown steadily for the last five years. They are plump, hardy little fellows, and probably a thousand are imported annually. They are taken on board the steamship at Dundee, Scotland, as a rule, stand the voyage well. They are from the Northern Islands, and are generally three years old or younger. Many of them are sold by auction in this city, and they go all over the country. They are only imported between May and December, and the trade is at its height. A good pony will bring from $40 to $50, though some blooded stock is now being imported for breeding purposes at much higher figures. The Michigan farmer has succeeded in breeding ponies so small that they are only for children's playthings, some of them only forty inches high."

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

A NUMBER of Iowa men living near Des Moines have become so far imbued with the Edward Bellamy idea of colonization that they have formed a colony. It is hope to found a community near Le Chaffles.

IT is estimated that nearly one-half of the next House of Representatives will be composed of new men. The causes which operate to this result are primarily a desire on the part of the sitting members to drop out of public life, and, secondly, failure to secure a re-nomination or a victory at the polls.

AFRICA has now at work within her borders 10 American, 12 British, and 4 Continental missionary societies. There are more than 700 ordained missionaries, and more than 7,000 native teachers. It is estimated that there are, of all white and native, about 175,000 communicants, and 800,000 adherents.

THE latest move in co-operation is a proposal by the Illinois Central Railroad company to interest its hands in the enterprise by selling each of them one or more shares on credit. In France this form of co-operation has been common for a quarter of a century or more, and it has occasionally been quite successful, as never been tried on railroads.

A six-eight-wheeled railroad church has been finished at Tifles, in the factory yard of the Transcaucasian Railway company, for use along the line. It is mounted by a cross at one end and a pair of three bells at the other end. The apartments for the priest and sitters for seventy persons. The altar is carved oak and all the furniture was manufactured at St. Petersburg.

The search light is about to be introduced on an extensive scale by inland steamers. The navigation on the Rhine is rendered very dangerous by the large number of shoals and narrow passes, the only indications of which are the buoys which are often most difficult to locate. With the aid of search lamp these can be seen so distinctly that night navigation will, in future, be deprived of much of the uncertainty and danger.

The magnitude of the Finnish nation has brought into notice by the beginning of its end at the hands of the Russian government. Finland has heretofore enjoyed practical independence in the management of her own affairs. The press, and Finland has twenty-two newspapers of her own, has been duly free in dealing with Finnish matters, but now there comes a warning, that it is well known, to the Helsingfors Nyastadtbladet not advocating its people's rights, even in the most sober manner, must stop. Finland must now prepare to lose all her ancient privileges.

The rapid extension of Russia's military system through Siberia to the Pacific coast, and the menace it conveys to Chinese interests, at last has roused the Celestials from their conservatism. It is reported that China intends to borrow $45,000,000 in this country for railroad purposes, and that in case it is not to the road projected from Pekin to Kiakhta, others will be laid out in Manchoria to offset the designs of Russia. The appearance of danger evidently alarmed the Chinese, and from present indications the empire soon will be engaged in railroad construction.

The Germans are losing no opportunity to list in their service any expert in any work whom they can secure. The latest acquisition is Captain Casati, an African explorer and Emin's comrade, who after he has visited his friends in Berlin will help Emin to look after some Germany's interests in Africa. Germany has, within the past few years, lost first-rate explorers in Africa than any other nation. The list includes such men as Nachtigal, Flegel, Wolf, Schy, Tappenbeck, Juelcke and others, the loss of these men has been a serious one to German enterprise, for it has not been found easy to replace them.

According to recent accounts, the natives of the Chin Mountains, in Asia, are unique. Their dwellings have furniture; they have no laws, no rulers and no government, except an elective village system. Medical skill and surgery are absolutely unknown. Their habits are repulsive. The tribes are confirmed drunkards, drinking great quantities of beer which they brew by themselves. They, however, display remarkable mechanical ingenuity, constructing wonderful bridges on a cantilever principle. In some of the sole arms are small knives and bows and arrows. They are skilful archers, killing tigers and bears at eighty paces hideously tattooed to prevent being carried off by the Burmans.

Maxson Waterman, of California, has made a protest against the destruction by the Department of the Interior of the Big Trees in Tulare County which will be wrought if the districts set off by the suspended surveys are sold to enter. Interest in the preservation of these magnificent trees ought to be confined to that State. These noblest trees on the continent, are under Government control is a preservation of the last clumps of National concern. Secretary Noble is earnestly hope, will find it in his power to comply with Governor Stoneman's request and to close temporarily the section in Tulare County where the trees are found. Congress can be induced upon to enact legislation in a form by which these grand works of nature will be permanently safeguarded.

The celebration of the quarter-century of the Salvation Army in London, which recently, General Booth of the Army is at work in 35 different countries, and its strength is now nearly 3,000 corps and 3,000 officers, and its strength is 6,000 officers. There are also 85 slum officers, 188 officers engaged in rescue work, 35 rescue homes, 65 food officers and 10 food depots. Two thousand women passed through the homes in England during last year; an average of 8,000 meals are served daily to the poor; 540 people are sheltered each night. The general contended that this was work which must appeal to all alike, opponents as well as friends of the Army. The organization itself, he said, would outlive its most violent critics, and those who lived to the jubilee of the Army twenty-five years hence would see it with a crystal palace of its own. He appealed to every Salvationist to do his duty—and more than his duty.

THE work of artificially propagating cod, which was begun by the Fish Commission on the coast of Massachusetts three or four years ago, has, the Commission states, resulted in great success. Last fall the fisherman reported an abundance of small cod on Nantucket Shoals, and during the present summer these fish, somewhat increased in size, have appeared in enormous numbers, chiefly young fish, which are reported to be very uniform in size, and with a few exceptions weighing only about five to seven pounds each—to small to come under the trade classification of "large fish." The Fish Commission has received information showing that this season, up to recent dates, about 4,000,000 pounds of these fish have been taken. The price paid to the fishermen is $2.85 per 100 pounds of fish as they come from the vessel. The value of the fishery, so far this season, would be $114,000, while the prospect is that these figures may be doubled before the fishing is ended.

A CANADIAN journal has published a comparative analysis of the public debts of the United States and of the Dominion, from 1867, inclusive, which is not likely to prove entirely pleasing to the taxpayers of the latter country. From this statement it appears that when in the year above named the debt of the United States was $2,508,151,211, and the annual interest was $138,892,451, the debt of Canada was $75,728,641, and the annual interest charged thereon $4,375,148. In 1889 the debt of this country had been reduced to $075,039,000, and the interest to $33,752,000, while the debt of that country had been increased to $237,530,000, and the interest to about $9,000,000. To state it in another form, in 1867 the debt of the United States was 33 times, and the interest 31 times that of Canada, in 1889 the debt of this country was only four times that of Canada, and the interest three and one-third times greater. In the first year named the debt of the United States was about $62 for each of the population, and that of Canada about $22. In 1889 the debt of this country was reduced to about $16 per head, while that of the other country was increased to $47 per head. "These," says our Canadian contemporary, "are startling figures."

OPINION is freely expressed among naval officers in the North Atlantic squadron at Key West, that the Government is making a grave mistake in not strongly fortifying Key West. It is pointed out that Key West virtually controls the Gulf of Mexico, the Straits of Florida and three-fourths of all commerce with the West Indies, Central America, and the northern part of South America. As a base of supplies, and as a naval and military point of operations, perhaps no place in the United States equals it in importance. Situated on the southernmost bay of Florida, distant fifty-nine miles from the mainland proper, and only ninety miles from Havana, Key West occupies an almost central position in the waters opening into the Gulf of Mexico. Between the key and the mainland the water is studded with innumerable small coral reefs and keys. The channels between these keys are for the most part so shallow, that vessels drawing over six feet of water are debarred from entering. The presence of the Gulf Stream compels vessels running into the Gulf to pass close to the Key West side of the channel. The same is true of the Straits of Gibraltar, where a strong current flowing seaward along the Morocco coast compels vessels to hug the northern or Gibraltar side of the channel. Vessels in consequence are brought under the guns of the "Rock," or within easy handling of war vessels lying under the shelter of the fortress. It is questionable whether Gibraltar as a commerce-protecting post is of more importance to England than is Key West to the United States.

Wonderful Wires.

The most remarkable wire ever known, it is said, is the Cambridge (Mass.) San Francisco time circuit, which was in operation in 1871-2. The wire extended from the Cambridge Observatory to San Francisco, by way of Boston, Springfield, Hartford, New York, Buffalo, Chicago, and Omaha, returning over the same route to Chicago, then to Pittsburg, Harrisburg, New York, New Haven, Providence, Boston, and into Cambridge. The observatories were "looped in" at each terminal, forming a complete circuit 6,852 miles in length.

The consideration of such a wire naturally suggests the deep sea cable—the longest and most wonderful of all telegraph lines.

Fancy a telegraph wire lying on the surface of the earth, stretching from New York to San Francisco, then picture its course through the valleys and over the Alleghanies and Rocky Mountains, leaping across bottomless chasms and hanging on mountain crags; then imagine this wire covered with water reaching above the highest mountain peaks, and you have a picture of the Atlantic cables. Many readers, no doubt, will be somewhat surprised to learn that there are ten of these submarine conductors connecting America with the Old World.

Italian Cruelty to Animals.

I have been reading the letter in a morning paper, headed "An Abominable Thing," and dealing with the snatching up of visitors' dogs in Florence, and the dispatching of them to the laboratory for instant vivisection. But, alas! outrageous as this is as a liberty, and horrible as a cruelty, it is by no means the most dreadful of the brutalities which are practiced upon animals in Italy and by Italians.

For instance, bad as it is no worse than the gouging out, or rather burning out with red hot irons, of the eyes of the singing birds, because it is thought that, as the wounded and ruined orbs are dying, the bird sings louder than ever to ease itself of the pain it is suffering, and I never knew any one yet who has seen the poor sightless songsters in their cages with their heads thrown up in the air who did not turn from them with a shudder of pity and horror.

And what of the spiked ball, tied loosely on the back of the ordinary Florentine or Roman cab-horse, that flaps up and down as the animal moves and so acts as a continual spur to him; and what of the kickings in the stomach and the punchings in the face which the vetturino thinks nothing of getting down from his seat to administer to his poor beast, even though you—his fare—beseech him to show more mercy.—*Galignani Messenger.*

A new element named "damaria" is said to have been discovered in the crater of an extinct volcano in Damaraland. It is reported to have an atomic weight of only 0.5, or half that of hydrogen, and, therefore, it is the lightest known substance.

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